



NEWS RELEASE

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For More Information, Contact:
Larry Shireley
North Dakota Department of Health
Phone: 701.328.2378 or 800.472.2180
E-mail: lshirele@state.nd.us

State Health Department Reports 156 Cases of Influenza

BISMARCK, N.D. –The North Dakota Department of Health today announced that 156 cases of influenza have been reported in the state, up from 75 reported last week.

“The number of influenza cases reported across the state has doubled each of the last two weeks,” said State Epidemiologist Larry Shireley. “It’s important that people take precautions not to spread the disease.”

Because influenza season in North Dakota typically peaks in late January or February, the Department of Health reminds high-risk individuals and their contacts that it’s not too late to get a flu shot. Getting a flu shot is the easiest and most effective way to protect yourself and your loved ones.

“The flu is potentially serious and can be life-threatening to the elderly and people at high risk for medical complications,” Shireley said. “Vaccination is the best means to prevent the flu.”

Each year, an estimated 10 percent to 20 percent of the population contracts influenza. Of the nearly 400 North Dakotans who die annually from complications of influenza and pneumonia, most are older than 64.

Typical flu symptoms include fever, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches and extreme fatigue. To help prevent the spread of flu, the following precautions should be followed:

- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when sneezing or coughing.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Stay home from work or school when you are ill.

For more information about influenza activity in North Dakota, visit www.ndflu.com.

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